

Message Text

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ACTION ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 SCA-01 VO-03 AID-05 /079 W

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R 060535Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5918

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3684

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN ACCEPTANCE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

1. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT ON JUNE 5, PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN VIETNAMESE SEEKING TO MIGRATE TO AUSTRALIA, EVACUEES FROM VIETNAM WHO ARE NOW UNDER AMERICAN JURISDICTION, AND REFUGEES (NOT OTHERWISE DEFINED). HE INDICATED THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD BE PREPARED TO ENTER- TAIN WIDER CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION OF THOSE PEOPLE DEFINED AS REFUGEES BUT MADE IT CLEAR BY IMPLICATION THAT EVACUEES UNDER AMERICAN JURISDICTION WOULD NOT BE GIVEN BENEFIT OF THIS WIDER CRITERIA.

2. PRIME MINISTER DEVOTED MUCH OF HIS ANSWER TO QUOTING FROM RECENT STATEMENT BY UNHCR (NOT SPECIFIED) WHICH IMPLIED THAT VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION TO VIETNAM COULD BE HAPPIEST SOLUTION TO REFUGEE PROBLEM.

3. WHITLAM ALSO INDICATED THAT AUSTRALIA IS PREPARED TO TAKE MORE REFUGEES WITHOUT CITING ANY OVERALL FIGURE AND THAT THERE IS AUSTRALIAN TEAM IN HONG KONG SELECTING THE REFUGEES.

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4. LIERAL BACKBENCHER MHR WENTWORTH INTERJECTED AT THIS POINT AND ASKED PRIME MINISTER IF HE WISHED TO WASH HIS HANDS. WENTWORTH WAS SUSPENDED FROM HOUSE FOR 24 HOURS.

5. A CATHOLIC PRIEST, JOSEPH FRANCES MURPHY SJ, A MEMBER OF SYDNEY BASED COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES FROM INDO-CHINA WHO MET WITH PRIME MINISTER JUNE 5 LATER TOLD DEPUTY COUNTRY PARTY LEADER IAN SINCLAIR THAT PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS ON SUBJECT WERE QUOTE HOPELESS ENDQTE.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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